

TRIGGER WARNING: SUICIDE and SELF-HARM

The following stories contain potentially disturbing content pertaining to suicide, self-harm and mental health issues. If someone is struggling with thoughts of suicide or self-harm, please reference the list of resources on A2, or call 911 or 988 for emergencies and immediate help.



GRAPHIC BY JULIANNA LAWRENCE ASST. DESIGN EDITOR

Offer support before it's too late

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. This was first declared in 2008 and has since been a month to recognize and connect to those affected by suicide, with suicidal ideations and raise awareness.

The Northwest Missourian is dedicating this paper to spreading awareness and education about Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and mental health. The news included in the paper is strictly about suicide and mental health.

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the United States. Between 2021 and 2022, the number of deaths by suicide raised 2.6%, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

This national month is also important in Maryville and at Northwest. Mosaic's Behavioral Health Center - Maryville's Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner - Board Certified Kristine Kramer said good mental health is im-

portant for people's overall wellbeing.

"This month is of grave importance to raise awareness of suicide prevention and be a light to individuals that are struggling by providing resources and creating supportive communities to battle against suicide," Kramer said in an email to The Missourian.

Wellness Services' Mental Health Outreach Coordinator Terra Feick said Northwest has a new program to educate students, faculty and staff on suicide prevention called C.A.L.M.

C.A.L.M. stands for create awareness, ask questions, learn resources and manage wellness. This program is different from previous ones because it was built by Northwest counselors and uses statistics and resources geared toward Northwest students.

"We have a survey that goes out every year to our Northwest students and roughly a quarter of the students who completed the survey reported suicidal thoughts," Feick said. "And

over half of the students who were surveyed reported experiencing anxiety or depression."

This program will help educate anyone on campus on how to respond to a crisis. Feick said suicide can be a difficult topic to talk about, but wants students to be prepared to handle it if they have to and to know the resources provided to get someone help.

The first week of October is also National Student Athlete Mental Health Awareness Week. Student athletes can experience a lot of stress and their mental health can be affected.

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month is a time for people to reach out and get help or learn more about suicide prevention. The Editorial Board believes it is important to raise awareness and offer resources before it is too late for someone to get help. We encourage anyone who needs help to reach out to any of the resources and feel like they're not alone in their battle with mental health.

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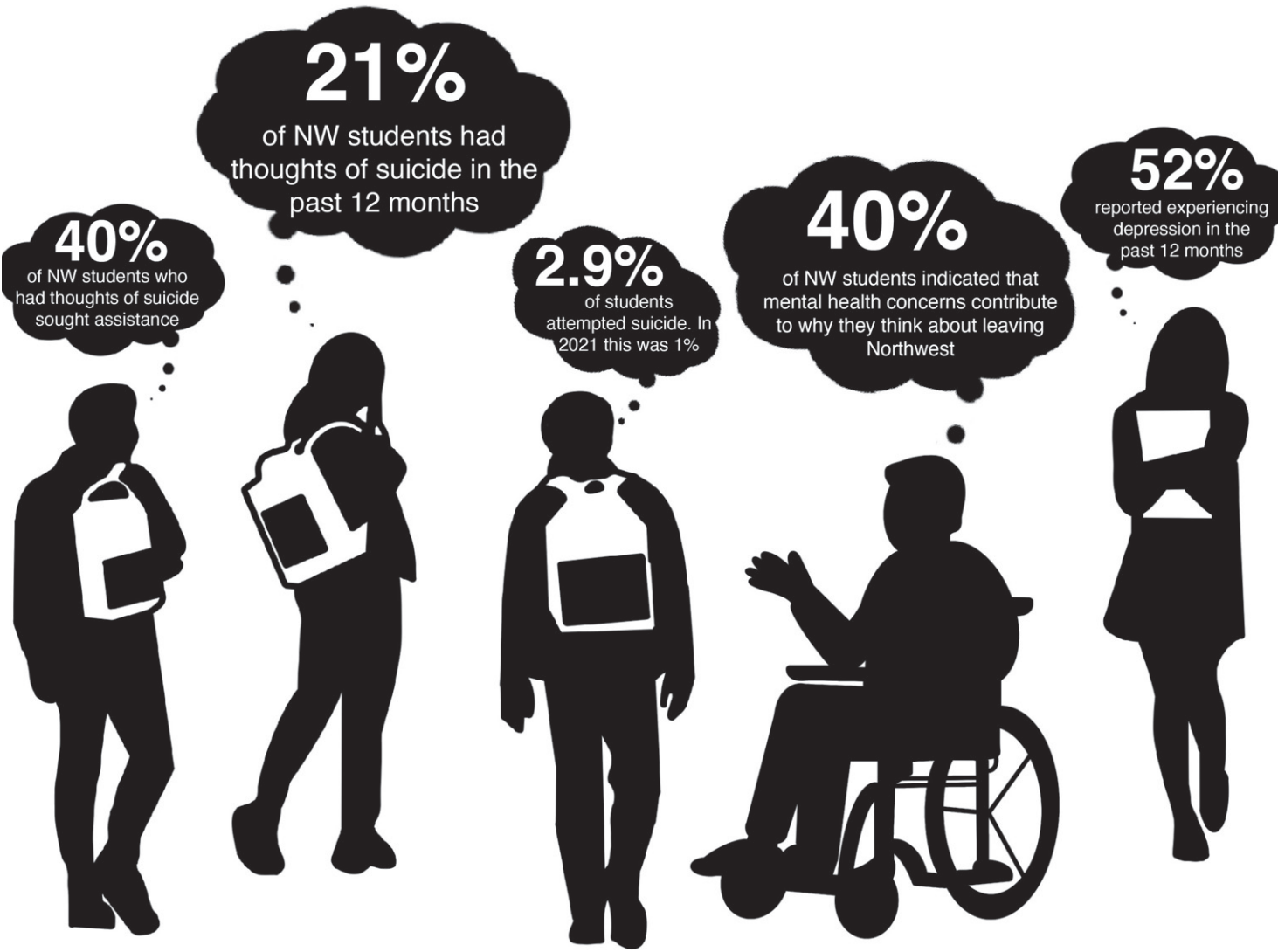
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‘THE PANDEMIC AFTER THE PANDEMIC’



SOURCE: MISSOURI ASSESSMENT OF COLLEGE HEALTH BEHAVIOR

GRAPHIC BY SAVANNAH ATHY-SEDBROOK DESIGN EDITOR

NW talks crisis response efforts

SIDNEY LOWRY
Editor-in-Chief | @sidney_lowry

Many conversations University officials have had surrounding mental health on campus have used the phrase “the pandemic after the pandemic.” In efforts to get ahead of the growing need for mental health resources and treatment, Northwest has brought more assets and assembled teams to help students.

Assistant Vice President of Health and Wellbeing Tyler Tapps said there are many different resources offered at Northwest through the Wellness Center not only for physical health, but mental health, too.

“Through our office and through what we do, it’s an obligation for us to try to keep students in class and try to keep them healthy,” Tapps said. “And, you know, a well student is a successful student.”

Continuing the conversation, many people from throughout campus gathered to talk about what Northwest is doing for student’s mental health at the Board of Regents Workshop Sept. 7. Vice President of Student Affairs Matt Baker started the conversation, talking about the rising need since the end of the pandemic.

“Mental health has been a conversation on college campuses for at least the last 30 or 40 years, but we’ve really seen a huge change in grit and resilience among students, tenacity in some ways, and their ability to deal with that,” Baker said at the workshop.

Based on the results of surveys sent to Northwest students, like the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors, it found that 21% of students had thoughts of suicide in the last year. It also found that 2.9% of students attempted suicide in 2022, whereas the number was only 1% in 2021.

To better support students, different offices, like the Office of Student Affairs, the University Police Department, the Wellness Center and faculty and staff, work together on crisis intervention teams.

The Behavioral Intervention team was assembled to follow up with students who may have had a concern with their mental health. It meets on a weekly basis to talk about how to follow up with those students.

People can start with the Concerning Behavior Reporting Form on the Northwest website, where they can report worrisome behavior to the University. This can include mental health, self-harm attempts of ideation, substance abuse or anything else related to well-being.

Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs Kori Hoffmann said UPD responds to nearly every report, then after the initial response it is determined what other resources can be given to the student to further support their mental health and well-being.

“So this team allows us to bring on



AARON HARE PHOTOGRAPHER

Kori Hoffmann responds to the Board of Regent’s questions regarding how mental health counselors are funded due to changes in Medicaid Laws at the Sept. 7 Board of Regents.

people from a lot of different areas on campus, and we’ll all see the same concerns and different concerns from the same students,” Hoffmann said in the workshop. “That kind of helps us identify and isolate those students and try to figure out how to support them.”

Not only are there advancements in the student affairs side of Northwest, but there is a plan in place to develop a master’s degree in counseling. Northwest used to have a program but is now thinking of bringing it back due to disparities in counseling providers in rural areas, requirement changes and a degree tuition reimbursement program.

Director of the School of Health Science and Wellness Terry Long said due to requirement changes for supervision within the degree track, this is now a viable option for the University to pursue.

Phase 1 of the development was in 2022 where Northwest listened to campus and community stakeholders and received feedback on the degree program. Phase 2 has a planning committee launching in early November 2023, and it plans to have a launch date of fall 2025.

In the MACHB results, it found that 31% of students in Missouri have experienced major depression, while 52% of Northwest students reported experiencing depression in the last year. It also found that 57% of college students in Missouri have experienced anxiety, while that number is 66% at Northwest.

Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville admitted 256 adult patients into its mental health unit from May to the beginning of

September, and 51 of those self-reported as Northwest students. Tapps said the counseling side of Wellness Services will have over 3,000 visits in one academic year.

After looking into the stressors on students, Northwest found that anxiety, depression and relationship issues were the top-three issues they face. To help with those, there is a new program for mental health training called C.A.L.M in Crisis. This is a two-part training with on-line and in-person sessions for both students and faculty and staff.

Alongside this program, Wellness Services offers multiple different resources, some with 24/7 access. Therapy Assistance Online is free to students and is a web-based program to help them overcome anxiety, depression and other mental health problems. TELLUS Health Student Support connects students with professionally-trained counselors and real-time support through a live chat option.

“You never know the life that you save, or you never know the life that you’re going to impact, because we don’t work backwards from that in student affairs,” Tapps said.

Baker said in the workshop presentation there will be more advancements made to mental health resources on campus and making sure everyone on campus can be supporting others.

“So with that, really what we ask for you is to be an advocate for mental health,” Baker said. “Recognize that as we invest in our services, that’s an investment in our long-term viability.”

RESOURCES:

**NATIONAL:
SUICIDE AND CRISIS
LIFELINE**
988
Text HOME to 741741

TREVOR PROJECT
866.488.7486

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
MENTAL HEALTH
RESOURCE CENTER**
1.866.615.6464

**NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON
MENTAL ILLNESS HELPLINE**
1.800.950.6264
Text NAMI to 741741
Text HelpLine to 62649

**CRISIS SUPPORT SERVICES
HELPLINE**
800.273.8255

TEEN LINE
800.852.8336

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND
MENTAL HEALTH
NATIONAL HELPLINE**
800.662.4357

**MISSOURI:
MOSAIC BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH CLINIC**
114 E. South Hills Dr.
660.562.4305

MOSAIC WALK-IN CLINIC
114 E. South Hills Dr.
660.562.4304

**MOSAIC MEDICAL CENTER -
MARYVILLE INPATIENT
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UNIT**
2016 S. Main St.
660.562.7922

**MOASIC MEDICAL CENTER -
MARYVILLE HOSPITAL**
2016 S. Main St.
660.562.2600

**FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER
- MARYVILLE**
109 E. Summit Dr.
660.582.3139 or 816.364.1501

**FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER
CRISIS LINE**
888.279.8188

**FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER -
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
URGENT CARE**
4906 Frederick Ave.
816.676.7222

**COMPASS COUNSELING
CENTER**
816.507.8896

**NEW BEGINNINGS
COUNSELING CENTER**
423 N. Market St.
660.562.4305

**NORTHWEST HEALTH
SERVICES**
3608 Faraon St.
St. Joseph, Missouri
816.232.4417

**WEST NODAWAY FAMILY
MEDICINE**
226 W. Main St.
Burlington Junction, Missouri
660.725.3365

HALLELUJAH COUNSELING
1315 S. Main St.
660.223.1700

**CAMPUS:
WELLNESS SERVICES**
660.562.1348

**NORTHWEST SUPPORT
LINE**
800.279.8188

**UNIVERSITY POLICE
DEPARTMENT**
660.562.1254

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SUICIDE PREVENTION
TRAINING**
Northwest Wellness
Services Wesbite

**THERAPY ASSISTANCE
ONLINE**
Northwest Wellness
Services Wesbite

Court programs work to break addiction habits

SIDNEY LOWRY
Editor-in-Chief | @sidney_lowry

About 2 million times each year, people in the U.S. with serious mental illness are booked into jails, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness. To help offer them the services they need to combat mental health and substance abuse issues, Missouri courts created an alternative treatment court programs to give them another option during sentencing.

These high-intensity programs are elective and can help those with alcohol addiction, drug addiction and people who have been previously found guilty of driving while intoxicated.

Associate Circuit Court Judge Robert Rice said at least one contributing factor of a person committing a crime was addiction or the abuse of substances. When keeping statistics of people who were sentenced to prison and the contributing factor of the criminal act was abuse or addiction, 60% of offenders would re-offend when they would parole out.

He said programs like these were designed to reduce recidivism, and so far it has been doing just that. The original 60% of re-offenders drop to 18% after successfully completing the court program.

“We weren’t treating the root of the problem,” Rice said. “The alternative treatment court programs were designed to attack the major obstacle which is addiction and or substance abuse. And so it is a hybrid program. It goes both into alcohol substance abuse treatment, but it also goes into mental health.”

There are five stages of the drug court program, the first being the most intensive with the number

of treatment sessions. In the beginning, people have individual sessions with counselors, group sessions and have to regularly meet with their probation officer. Throughout the rest of the stages, people have to continue to go to sessions, meet with their probation officer and complete mental health assessments and substance abuse assessments to confirm they are sticking with the program.

“We’ll go over everybody and (Judge Corey Harron) will celebrate the good news and someone will say ‘Hey judge, I’ve been sober 92 days’ and we’ll all clap because that’s a big deal,” Rice said. “Or ‘Hey judge, you know, I just got my kids back.’ You know, we celebrate the good news. On the bad news, you don’t rub their nose in it, but you correct and say, ‘OK, now this is the sanction.’”

He said the programs can be completed as quickly as one year, but people typically take one and a half to two years to complete because there can be bumps in the road where they need to get back on track.

These programs work closely with Family Guidance Center, which helps adults and teens who struggle with behavioral health, like substance abuse, find resources to overcome those issues.

Elizabeth Crumpler, coordinator of integrated behavioral health at Family Guidance Center, oversees many different programs throughout northwest Missouri. After being accepted into the substance abuse program, a lot of group therapy and education on how to maintain recovery is involved in the program.

“We don’t force anybody to do anything, so they get to pick and choose what groups they want to attend based on what their need

18.4% of U.S. adults suffering with mental illness also experience substance use disorder



National and Missouri Mental Health Numbers



Mental illness and substance use disorders are involved in 1 in every 8 emergency department visits

SOURCE: NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS

Every year 2 million people with mental illness are booked into jails



4 in 10 people in Missouri with a mental health condition received any treatment in the past year

INFOGRAPHIC BY ALEXIS STARKS PHOTO EDITOR

Student organization works against mental health stigma



ALLISON DUARTE PHOTOGRAPHER
President of Northwest Dietetic Association Bekah Kleinschmit talks about nutrition and how diet can contribute to mental health at the Behavioral Sciences Association club meeting Sept. 27.

KATHLEEN HARNER
Missourian Reporter | @TheMissourian

The Behavioral Sciences Association incorporated nature to improve its mental health for the month of September.

The Behavioral Sciences Association offers advice through meetings for those struggling with mental health.

The Behavioral Sciences Association is a club that focuses on students’ mental health. Behavioral Sciences Association Active Minds Chair Gursheen Sood said people in the club are mental health promoters.

“We try to create a safe space for people to come in and talk,” Sood said. “Talk about their problems, issues, anything mental health related. Even if it’s not mental health related, you can come and talk to us. It’s a safe space on campus where you can share your feelings or just hang out. It’s very chill.”

Secretary and Service Coordinator Genevieve Plum said every month has a theme. The theme for September is nature. Plum said the club has been doing a variety of activities related to nature this month such as floral therapy and picking up trash around campus.

President Jada Irving said some of

“

You may feel like you know everybody else has it together, and you’re the only one that’s like two steps behind. But, being open to talk about it really makes me feel a lot less alone.”

GENEVIEVE PLUM

SECRETARY AND SERVICE COORDINATOR
THE MISSOURIAN

the activities going on this year include Paint and Sip and I Will Listen. Paint and Sip is a fundraising event where students can paint and have non alcoholic drinks, and the art will be displayed on campus. Irving said Paint and Sip is to raise money for its I Will Listen event. Paint and Sip takes place from 11-2 p.m. Oct. 14 at Colden Pond.

I Will Listen is an event where others come together to share their mental health stories through art and talking about it. This event takes place March 28 in the J.W. Jones Student Union.

“So it’s a national event, but we do it here and it’s kind of an ‘end the stigma’ type of thing,” Irving said. “So for our art exhibit, we have people all around the community submit their artwork, like elementary school kids, middle school kids, people from our community and our school.”

Plum said this was her favorite event the Behavioral Sciences Association has put on. She said she liked how it brought different perspectives.

Vice President Amber Sandlin encourages others to seek out resources or join the Behavioral Sciences Association. She said it is a safe space to make connections. Plum said talking through things is the best thing for someone struggling with mental health.

“You may feel like you’re the only person struggling with that thing,” Plum said. “You may feel like you know everybody else has it together, and you’re the only one that’s like two steps behind. But, being open to talk about it really makes me feel a lot less alone.”

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Sunday

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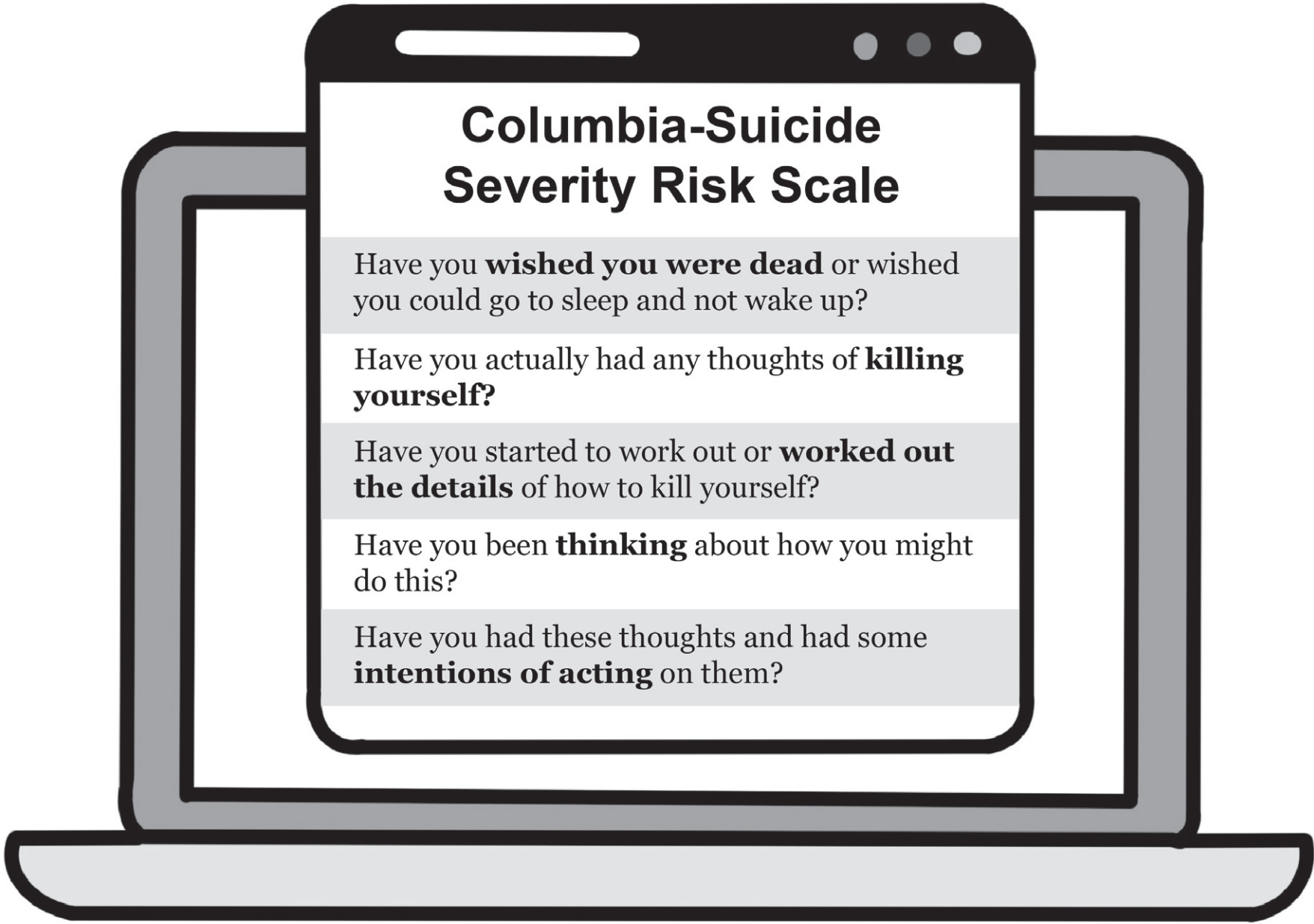
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INFOGRAPHIC BY SAVANNAH ATHY-SEDBROOK DESIGN EDITOR

Suicide screening links students, counselors

SIDNEY LOWRY
Editor-in-Chief | @sidney_lowry

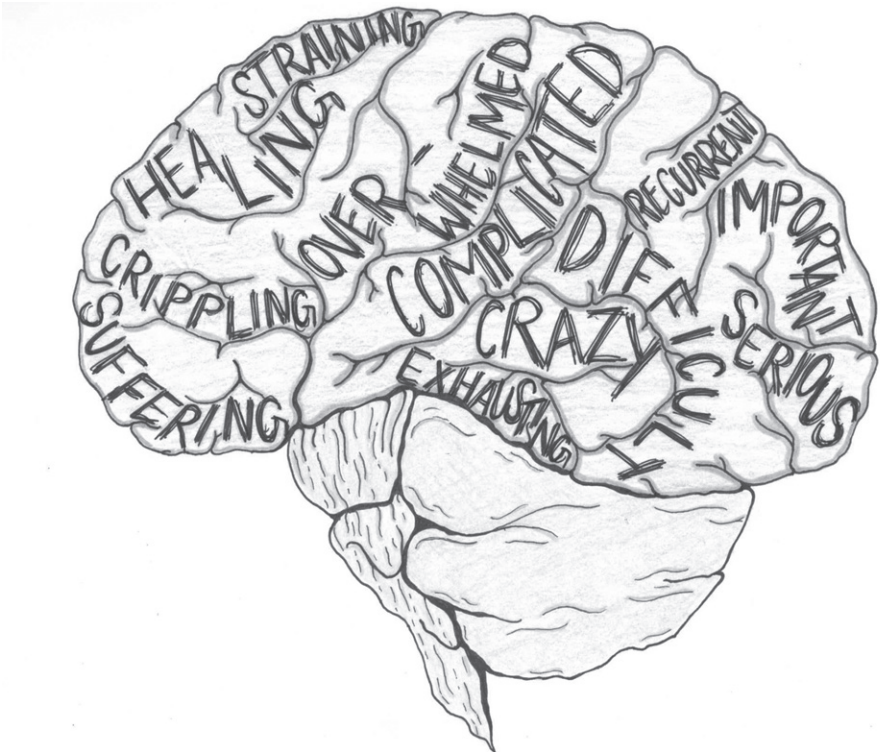
Every time students go into the Wellness Center, they are asked a series of questions to determine suicide risk. These questions are part of the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale that help providers identify risk, severity, immediacy and level of support the person needs.

Before adopting this scale in August 2016, Northwest started with asking a similar set of questions in 2015. Assistant Director of Wellness Services - Clinic Services Judy Frueh said the clinic started asking these questions because people seemed to be more comfortable coming to a clinic rather than going straight to counseling.

“You will look at the data for anybody, not just in college-aged students, they found those that died by suicide, over 50% of those have been seen in their health care providers office in 30 days or less before they died,” Frueh said.

The list of questions has been supported by the Department of Defense, the Food and Drug Administration, the World Health Organization, the American College Health Association, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and more, and it is free for people to use.

The C-SSRS starts with three questions to determine the risk a person is to suicide. If they answer “yes” to one of the first three questions, they are asked another two questions to help providers further determine what action to take to



HAILEY JOHNSON-NEESER CARTOONIST

best support the student.

Clinic visitors are not only asked a series of questions regarding suicide risk but also questions to analyze their depression and anxiety. The Generalized Anxiety Disorder Assessment-7 and the GAD-2 allow care providers to measure anxiety symptom severity with a simple set of seven questions. Based on answers,

people are placed into categories of none to minimal, mild, moderate and severe.

The Wellness Center also uses the Patient Health Questionnaire-2 and the PHQ-9 to screen for depression. This also will allow providers to look into further care for the patient.

Frueh said based on the series of answers a student gives, the clinic can decide

whether it should give the students a list of resources, recommend them to a counselor or possibly move forward with hospitalization if they don’t feel the person is safe.

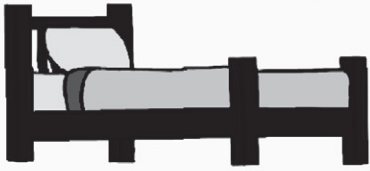
“In some cases, they may see a counselor right then, and then may be transported to the hospital, depending on what their discussion is with the counselor,” she said. “In some cases, it may be we need to see the counselor, maybe the next day, or just let their providers be informed of that.”

Frueh said many times people will come into the Wellness Center and have a realization about the state of their mental health when they are asked those series of questions. When people have to quantify the amount of days they have been bothered by problems that could possibly stem from depression or anxiety, it helps them comprehend the way they have been feeling.

Because these questions are asked on every visit, some people wonder why they are still being asked these questions even though they may not feel they are at risk of suicide, depression or anxiety. Frueh said that despite some people not needing those questions, it is for the greater good.

“We hear that sometimes, ‘you keep asking me the same questions,’” Frueh said. “And, you know, for those that don’t need it, it probably is a little annoying, but everybody needs help once in a while. Everybody feels anxious once in a while, and it is OK to not be OK. And so, I guess my response is, you know, this may take a little bit more time, but we want to help care for all of you.”

WAYS TO BETTER MENTAL HEALTH



Get Enough Sleep

Lack of sleep can cause mood shifts, like annoyance and anger.



Connect With Others

Building a support group can help with stress.



Be Physically Active

Exercise can reduce feelings of stress and depression.



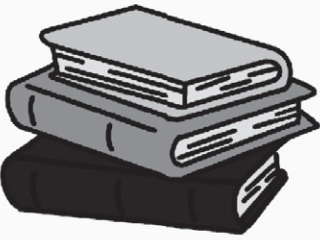
Eat Healthy

Not having enough nutrients can contribute to mental illness.



Balance Emotions

Don’t let negative emotions take over.



Develop Coping Skills

These skills help people deal with stressful and sad situations.

GRAPHIC BY SAVANNAH ATHY-SEDBROOK DESIGN EDITOR

Don't feel alone with suicidal struggles



There is a never-ending cycle with suicide. When a person takes their own life, the pain continues on to family, friends and loved ones. With that pain, hope shrinks, and without hope, you are left in a secluded room wondering why you are living in the first place.

Whether you know a person who has harmed themselves or have had thoughts of harming your own self, there is hope and time to heal. As a college student entering my 20s, I had to learn how to find my own peace in this place of chaos. This took me a long time to learn, but it is worth the patience and work that goes into healing.

The everyday pressures that students face can cause harm to their mental health, and sometimes it can be too late. With deadlines, jobs and learning how to balance one's own life outside of their childhood home, it can be difficult to keep yourself sane.

Students are put into a whole other world when entering college. On one hand, you are in school working on achieving your dreams and aspirations, and, on the other, you are entering the world of adulthood. Sometimes this comes with added pressure that many students aren't always prepared for.

These are the years a person figures out their own identity while still dealing with the tribulations of being an adult.

It is important to take care of yourself and give yourself a break occasionally, but for many college students, taking a break or finding time to relieve stress can be hard to do. With students working many jobs, trying to stay up-to-date with campus organizations, figuring out how to pay for college, living situations and different amounts of class work, there is not a lot of time for breaks.

This causes many students to deal with mental health struggles that are gained from college or already existing problems, and it is difficult to find balance in everyday living. About 32.4% of college students in 2022 who received mental health services had serious thoughts about suicide, according to Statista. Students need to be provided with the right, effective resources and help they need.

If you have a friend or loved one who is having these thoughts in college and is dealing with these issues, let them know they do have time. A simple conversation that can break someone's everyday routine can be lifesaving.

Throughout my life, I have always dealt with my own personal mental health struggles, and learning how to cope with these in different situations and ages has been a long process. This became an extreme issue for me during my past years in college and sometimes I would be the one sitting in my dorm room alone wondering if there was any hope left for me.

After many long nights of wondering why I am here, or if I should be, I found there is hope. Remind yourself and everyone in your life that help is available and know that you are not alone.



ILLUSTRATION BY JULIANNA LAWRENCE ASST. DESIGN EDITOR

OUR VIEW:

Take signs of suicide seriously, it could save someone's life

Suicide is a growing and critical issue in the United States. Every 11 minutes, someone died by suicide in 2021, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is a complex problem that goes beyond deaths — 1.7 million adults attempted suicide and 12.3 million adults seriously considered suicide in 2021.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. It is dedicated to those who died, those who have been affected and those who still struggle. The Editorial Board encourages everyone to educate themselves on suicide prevention and how they can help themselves and others.

The impact of suicide is far-reaching, and those involved can experience life-changing grief and trauma. It is important to be aware of this problem and know that it is preventable. There are measures that can be taken to help those who are struggling.

Certain behaviors can be warning signs that someone is thinking about suicide. It is complicated, but in many cases, someone considering suicide is showing symptoms, and it is essential to know those signs. There are things people say and do that can indicate they need help.

Hearing someone talk about a specific plan for how they would end their life is a warning sign, according to The Jed Foundation. They may also talk about wanting to die or how people in their life would be better off without them. Even if they seem like they aren't serious, someone joking about killing themselves can also be an indicator of serious suicidal thoughts.

Changes in the way someone acts when thinking about suicide can include sleeping less or more than usual. If someone's sleep schedule is abruptly changing along with other odd behavior, it could be a sign of suicidal thoughts. Other symptoms can include eating less or more than usual, a

lack of personal hygiene, an increase in drug or alcohol use, reckless acts and unusual changes in routine.

If someone is thinking about suicide, it can be difficult for them to reach out, but the first person they would reach out to is someone they are comfortable with. For some people, it can be a relative, friend, counselor, teacher or professor. Knowing what steps to take when confided in is critical.

It can feel like a lot of pressure when talking to someone about their mental health. When it is uncertain whether someone is actually considering suicide, it is the best decision to take action. The first step is to find out if the person is in danger and plans on acting on suicidal thoughts, according to Mayo Clinic. Be as sensitive as possible but ask direct questions such as: Are you thinking about dying? How are you coping with what's been happening in your life? Are you thinking about suicide?

Asking someone these questions will support them by giving them an opportunity to talk about it. This can reduce the person's risk of acting on those feelings, according to Mayo Clinic.

If someone is displaying warning signs or admits to having suicidal thoughts, do not handle it alone. Do not be critical of the person, try to only offer support — never promise to keep their feelings of suicide a secret. Urge them to seek help from a professional and get them in contact with helplines. If it is an emergency, call 911 or take them to the nearest hospital.

Knowing these preventative measures can be critical to someone's life. It is important to take this knowledge seriously and to continue raising awareness about suicide prevention. It can be the difference between losing a mother, father, sibling, friend, or loved one and still having them in your life.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel



Almost every college student has a story about suicide. Whether it's a friend, relative or even themselves, most have experience with the negative aspects of mental health — myself included.

Thoughts of suicide and self-harm do not only occur in teenagers or adults. In 2021, suicide was the second-leading cause of death in children ages 10-14, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For myself, I experienced this as early as eighth grade. I was 14 years old.

I am here today, freshly 20 years old. I remember the time in my life when I was so wrapped up in depression and anxiety, I believed the easiest solution was to end it. For anyone who is there now, I'm here to tell you this is not where the story ends.

As much as it may not feel like it, you are not alone. When it feels hopeless, it's important to remember the resources at your disposal. However, I'm not just talking about the obvious ones like contacting the suicide hotline (988) or visiting the Wellness Center. I'm talking about finding what is worth fighting for — your light at the end of the tunnel.

Every day, I picked a reason I needed to see tomorrow. Some days it was to see my friends, attend a family function, pet my dogs after school or even simply because I wanted to see one more sunset. It's important to find something worth living for. There is always a reason to stay and a reason to fight for yourself.

Whether it's your cat, a meal your mom is making, a plant, a book you want to read or a movie that's coming out in a month, find your reason to keep living.

One of the best things to do for yourself is to establish a support system. Having people to talk to in your time of need is crucial. It is important to create a circle of people you trust and can rely on.

I met my best friend in fifth grade. She was my rock when I was at my lowest and was the person I turned to when I couldn't find my light. She was, and still is, one of the biggest cheerleaders in my support system.

If you do not believe you have someone you can trust, I urge you to go to the Wellness Center. While it sounds obvious, people don't reach out to the accessible resources around them. I have a counselor at the Wellness Center who I feel has taken the time to know me and is always rooting for me. Go schedule an appointment.

Having a mental illness is hard, and no one should have to deal with it alone. Give yourself a chance by utilizing these skills. If you truly want to heal, you have to fight for yourself more than anyone else. No one can want it more than you, no one can do the work for you.

Healing is hard, but that doesn't mean it's impossible. You are not your mental illness, and you are worth fighting for.

Even in the days when you feel like there is nothing else to live for, remind yourself that your journey does not end here. Find your reason to keep living, and fight for your life.

Volleyball continues conference slate

STEVEN CROSBY
Sports Reporter | @sicsteve27

Northwest volleyball is going on a road trip as it prepares to face Emporia State at 7 p.m. Sept. 29 in Emporia, Kansas, and No. 15 Washburn at 2 p.m. Sept. 30 in Topeka, Kansas.

The Bearcats will head into the weekend after a pair of sweeps over Missouri Western Sept. 19 and Newman Sept. 22. Coach Amy Woerth said Northwest played with good intensity throughout the previous week, though it can always play at a higher level. She said the Bearcats stayed in control and didn't play down to their opponent's level.

"I love challenges on the road," Woerth said. "We tend to say we're road warriors and have a little hat we like to bring. I brought it against (Western), and it's going to continue to come with us until we're starting to understand the warrior mentality that needs to take place."

Northwest (7-5) will start its road trip with a match against Emporia (7-5). The Hornets will be coming into the game after a week of losses as they fell to Central Missouri, 3-1, Sept. 22 and were swept by Missouri Southern Sept. 23. Woerth said the Bearcats will have to pay attention to Emporia's play style and will be learning about transfer-athletes the Hornets have brought in as they play.

Northwest will continue its trip as it takes on Washburn (9-2). The Ichabods are coming off their second loss of the season, after being swept by Central Sept. 23. Junior libero Kyah Luhning said the Bearcats are feeling good going into the weekend.

"I know that we love to play at Washburn, so I feel like we have a little bit of fire under us this week," Luhning said. "Their fans — and their parents even — get pretty rowdy, so I felt like overall the vibes are good."

Northwest had two players earn MIAA honors for the week. Luhning secured the MIAA Defensive Player of the Week, after having 49 digs over the course of the week, and redshirt freshman setter



Northwest volleyball junior middle blocker Abby Brunssen spikes the ball over Newman players at the Sept. 22, 3-0 win. Brunssen hit two spikes and five kills over the total of the three-set match.

Ella Caffery received the MIAA Setter of the Week honor with 31 assists against Western and 26 assists against Newman. Woerth said both players impact the program by being hard workers and leaders who help set the tone of energy.

Luhning set the Northwest record for most digs in a three-set match during its match against Newman. Luhning had 31 digs against the Jets, beating the old record — which she also held, along with Paige Spangenberg (2007-10) — by three digs. Luhning is No. 1 for the MIAA in total digs, with 220 and third in the conference in digs per set at 4.68. She said part of the reason why the ball came her way so often against Newman was because her teammates up front were

UP NEXT

NW vs. Emporia State
7 p.m. Sept. 29
Emporia, Kansas

NW vs. Washburn
2 p.m. Sept. 30
Topeka, Kansas

doing their job well.

"(Assistant) coach Jacquie (Cason) told me I was at like 11 or something, so I was like, 'That's pretty good for the first set,'" Luhning said "I was shocked because I feel like we handled Newman pretty well."

SOFTBALL CONTINUED FROM A8

The Spoofhound offense started the Worth County game like it had in the previous contests, scoring in the first inning. Maryville has scored in the first inning in its previous four games, and head coach Tyler Nickerson said he has been impressed.

"We have been playing at a high level this past week, getting the bats going early and holding teams down on defense," Nickerson said.

Sprague allowed one run in the bottom of the second, with four Tiger batters reaching base in the frame. Sprague and Tiger's senior pitcher Brooklyn Richardson both had great games on the mound, each only allowing one run through five innings.

The top of the sixth inning was seemingly the wake-up call the Spoofhound bats needed. Schulte led the inning off with a triple to sophomore right fielder Rylee Ruckman. Schulte scored on the play because of a throwing error by the Tiger shortstop.

"The turning points of the



Maryville softball junior first baseman Emma Sprague launches a ball into the outfield at the Sept. 19 game against Chillicothe. The Spoofhounds took their 12th loss of the season, ending the game with an 11-8 score.

game are when we get tired — for us, the most important improvement is finishing our games like we start them," Schulte said.

Another run scored in the inning thanks to senior second baseman Aliya Farmer. She drove Sprague in on a single to right field. Maryville led 3-1 af

ter the sixth.

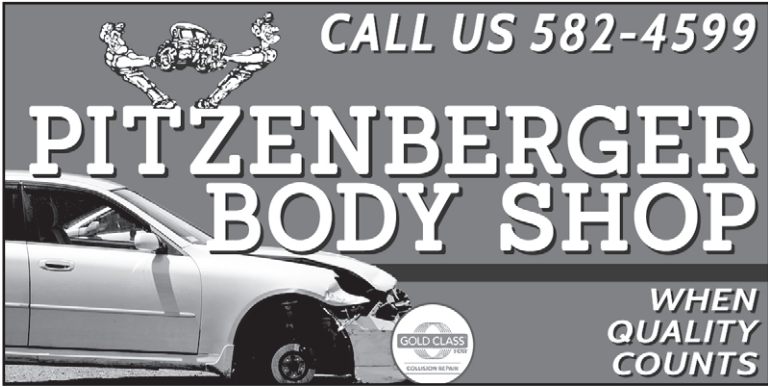
The Tiger bats had been kept quiet by Sprague until the bottom of the seventh inning. The first three batters of the inning

singled. Worth County was able to escape with a win after senior left fielder Brylee Rush hit a ground ball to second base that scored the tying and winning runs. The Spoofhounds lost 4-3 in seven innings.

The Spoofhounds rebounded against Bishop LeBlond (7-10) Sept. 26, 2-1. Maryville won the contest in 14 innings, and Schulte scored the only two runs for the offense. Hornickel was on the rubber again and lowered her earned run average on the season to 4.30 and has now thrown 40 innings this season.

"Turning points happen when pressure is applied to us," Nickerson said. "We have to play our game from start to finish and turn the table by applying the pressure to our opponents."

Maryville is now 7-13 with six regular season games left. The 'Hounds will return home to play North Platte (13-5) Oct. 2 and Savannah (13-6) Oct. 3. The Spoofhounds will be looking for their first win against North Platte since the 2020 season and its first win against Savannah since 2016.



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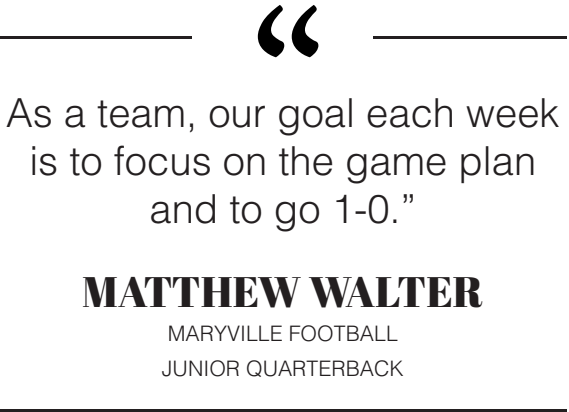
AWAY CONTINUED FROM A8

"I feel confident in myself and the other guys' abilities to step up whenever our name is called," Walter said. "At the end of the day, it comes down to trusting in each and every one of ourselves, and I feel our team has that trust. I need to work on leading the offense and being confident in my job. Settling in and getting comfortable will also be a focus point for me early on in the game."

Walter said having a winning streak is a good feeling, and the streak against the Cardinals is left up to the athletes on the field to continue the graduated athletes' legacies as the culture gets passed on every year.

"I have a lot of faith in Matthew's ability for QB," Zarbano said. "I mean, I have been playing with him since seventh grade. He is a great kid and has an awesome attitude — what more can you ask for? I mean I could just go on and on about him. Matthew won't disappoint, just watch."

After the game against Cameron, Webb said he is proud of his defense for shutting out the Dragon's offense. He said Cameron is a team that



“

As a team, our goal each week is to focus on the game plan and to go 1-0.”

MATTHEW WALTER

MARYVILLE FOOTBALL
JUNIOR QUARTERBACK

likes to run the ball 53 times in one game but was limited by the Spoofhound's defense to an average of 2.8 yards per carry.

The 'Hounds will have a roughly 51-minute trek south to play the Cardinals in the mid-80-degree weather Friday evening with what Walter said he hopes is their opportunity to continue the team's win streak.

"We have the mindset to destroy anyone we're playing," Zarbano said.

BATTLE CONTINUED FROM A8

Additionally, the Mules are the top-scoring offense in the MIAA, averaging 45.3 points per matchup, and the Bearcats are No. 4 in points allowed (18.5) and No. 1 in rushing yards (47.3) allowed per game.

Northwest will bring the MIAA's leading rusher, sophomore running back Jay Harris, who tops the conference with 460 yards on the ground — 115 per game. On the other side, Central has the MIAA's leading passer, junior quarterback Zach Zebrowski, a transfer-athlete from Southern Illinois. Zebrowski has the most passing yards (1,475) and pass-

ing touchdowns (18) in the conference so far this season.

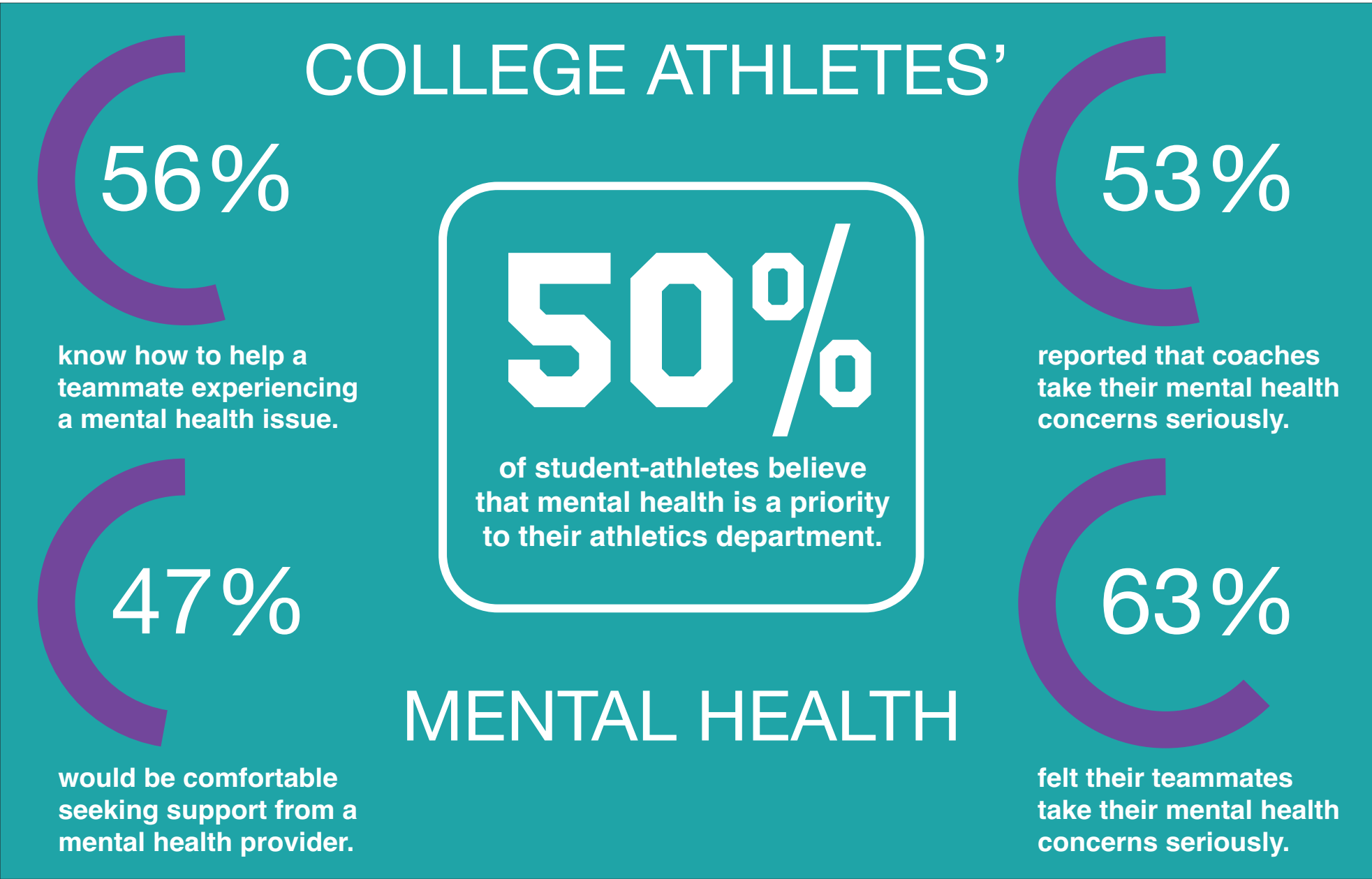
The conference bout in Warrensburg will also be somewhat of a Bearcat reunion. Central second-year coach Josh Lamberson played quarterback for Northwest from 2002-05. He ranks No. 4 in program history for touchdown passes with 65.

"We're good friends, and we'll continue to be good friends, other than Saturday afternoon until the game ends," Wright said with a smirk. "I think Josh has done a great job of, you know, really flipping his roster. I feel like they brought in a lot of transfers, a lot of new blood, guys that are more bought into his system and his way of doing things."

It will also be the Bearcats' third road game this season. With the Mules deciding to make the Saturday afternoon matchup a black-out game and giving a 21% discount on tickets to the game for their fans, it might be a packed house as Northwest comes to visit. Fisher said road games are always some of the most exciting moments in a season.

"The road trips are always fun," Fisher said. "I think most of the memories you make are on the road, traveling with our guys, being in the hotel and you can get food. And, going into another team's stadium, it's always a fun challenge, and to go get a big win there would be awesome for us, and I think we're ready for it."

MENTAL HEALTH WITHIN COLLEGE ATHLETICS



SOURCE: 2021 MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE NCAA OUT OF 9,808 STUDENT-ATHLETES

GRAPHIC BY DELANIE DYKES MISSOURIAN DESIGNER

Athletes talk support with well-being

WESLEY MILLER
Managing Editor | @wesleymiller360

They stay up late studying for that exam, they get up early for weightlifting, they go to a few classes, they go to a two-and-a-half hour practice, they sometimes watch film and then they do it all over again.

While not specific to everyone, that’s the rough schedule of a student-athlete. The life of any person or student can be tough, but student-athletes add on the pressure of their respective sports while meeting the everyday requirements in class and in their personal lives. While sports may not necessarily be the toughest thing in the world, it can be hard for some to manage the workload.

In 2021, the NCAA conducted a wellness survey and found a strong concern for mental health from student-athletes. The NCAA surveyed 9,808 student-athletes — 3,978 from Division II — and found 47% of athletes in women’s sports and 25% of athletes in men’s sports “constantly” or “most every day” felt overwhelmed in fall 2021.

Additionally, 94% of women’s sports athletes said “yes, within the last month” to feeling overwhelmed and 78% of men’s sports participants also said the same.

At Northwest, there are over 324 student-athletes — the track and field teams’ rosters have not been updated for 2023-24 yet, but some athletes do also compete in cross country, which does have updated rosters.

Whether it be on the field in Bearcat Stadium, the court in Bearcat Arena, the track in the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse or any other facility on campus, Bearcat athletes are challenged to put forth their best effort athletically and academically, while meeting the requirements of their daily personal lives.

Northwest football junior defensive end Jake Fisher is a graduate student academically, and he said he hasn’t faced any specific mental health struggles during his five years with the Bearcats but seasons can feel long.

“You got schoolwork on top of film study and everything else, I think it can weigh on you,” Fisher said.

Fisher is tasked with top performance as a starter on Northwest’s defensive line. He has to adapt to any pressure that might come with playing for a program with six national championships and an active playoff streak of 18 consecutive appearances.

While he said it can sometimes be a challenge to balance the pressure of athletics and academics, he also said he feels like he’s al-

It becomes, I guess, more real knowing there was a connection related to it being an unbelievable student-athlete competing at such a high level and being vulnerable and feeling she may not have somewhere to go, that’s frightening as a coach to know that a player can harbor that in them.”

MARC GORDON
SOCCER COACH FOR NORTHWEST

ways had the help he needs.

“When you come play college athletics, you got to really prioritize your time,” Fisher said. “They’re always looking out for us here, whether it be players, coaches, trainers, they’re always giving us the outlet to go talk to them. Really talk about family here, but I really think it is true — you can go talk to anyone if something’s wrong.”

Coach Rich Wright has seen a lot of players come in and out of the football program since he first began as the defensive line and special teams coordinator prior to the 2004 season.

Now, in his seventh year at the helm of the team, there are 133 athletes on the football squad — the largest roster in Bearcat Athletics. He said one of the ways he and his coaching staff support their athletes with their mental health is by reminding them to only focus on what they can control.

“It’s something we work on every day,” Wright said. “There’s a lot here that we still control — you know, how we practice, how we come to the complex every day, what kind of teammates we are — those are all things that play into it.”

He said the assistant and position coaches often have close relationships with the players, which helps keep players comfortable about opening up as well as gives them someone to connect to.

Tennis coach Mark Rosewell has also worked with a lot of athletes during his 40 years at Northwest. He’s seen many highs, with 23 MIAA regular season championships, and plenty of lows. For him, that’s why it’s important to be consistent.

“It’s hard to do sometimes in athletics — come off a great win or a bad loss or something like that,” Rosewell said. “Try to check the athletes as far as they are acting, as we would say, you know, on a regular basis. There’s a lot going into it, but, I mean, it’s the state of the world now as far as where we are.”

Rosewell has opened up his

world to the whole world, with 13 international athletes across men’s and women’s tennis — out of 15 overall. Even though he coaches men’s and women’s sports and leads athletes from across the globe, he said the approach to mental health remains the same.

“Everybody has problems,” Rosewell said. “We do have a lot of international athletes, but that’s been going on for 40-50 years. And, so, we’re familiar with that, but, like I said, it can happen to anybody.”

Northwest soccer freshman forward Ekaterina Theoharidis may not be adapting to moving across the world, but she is navigating her first year as a collegiate athlete. The Liberty, Missouri, native notched two all-state selections at Liberty High School.

She is learning to transition that success to college while working through her first college class workload. For any student-athlete, finding a balance can be tough, but that can be especially true for those who are new to it. Theoharidis said it has been challenging, but she feels her teammates have made it much easier.

“We’re all helping each other, making sure that we all are staying on track with our stuff,” Theoharidis said. “I think being organized is the key that’s helping me right now, but definitely, definitely a balance that I have to work on.”

Her coach, Marc Gordon, has tried to establish how important mental health is. Prior to the match against Northeastern State Oct. 14, 2022, Gordon and the soccer team decided to use the game as an avenue to raise awareness for Katie’s Save Initiative.

Katie’s Save Initiative was started by Steve and Gina Meyer, parents of Katie Meyer, who was the goalkeeper for Stanford before dying by suicide in March 2022. While the Bearcats’ support was partially sparked by junior midfielder Atiana Stratman, whose mom was Gina Meyer’s roommate in college, Gordon said the event really hit close for him.

“It becomes, I guess, more

real knowing there was a connection related to it being an unbelievable student-athlete competing at such a high level and being vulnerable and feeling she may not have somewhere to go, that’s frightening as a coach to know that a player can harbor that in them,” Gordon said.

He said he practices an open-door policy and stresses to his athletes that they can talk to him, assistant coach Quaid Curtin or their teammates about struggles they’re facing. He said he focuses on each player understanding they are more than just an athlete.

Volleyball coach Amy Woerth is in charge of 16 student-athletes. She said the schedule and pressure can sometimes be overwhelming, therefore she makes sure the team always takes a day to rest.

“Mondays, we take a day that we slow down what we do in practice, and I think that helps balance out some of our intensity that we’re doing during the peak time that we would have,” Woerth said. “But, the other thing we do is we just talk about it. It’s OK to not be OK. We definitely are pro-mental health and talk about it a lot and try to support our student-athletes any way we can.”

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BATTLE IN THE 'BURG



AARON HARE PHOTOGRAPHER

Northwest football sophomore quarterback Chris Ruhnke celebrates as he crosses the end zone and scores a touchdown in the first half of the 59-0 win Sept. 23. Ruhnke scored three passing touchdowns, along with one on the ground, against Lincoln.

Bearcats look to slow Mules

WESLEY MILLER

Managing Editor | @wesleymiller360

On the top floor of the Lamkin Activity Center, a handful of buckeyes sit on a circle window ledge, overlooking the south end of Bearcat Stadium. On the inside is the office of seventh-year Northwest football coach Rich Wright.

A mixture of tradition and superstition — and courtesy of a tree on campus — Wright said he’s kept buckeyes in his office every season as a symbol of good luck. Where Wright and the Bearcats perhaps hope they bring good luck next is in a road contest with No. 21 Central Missouri Sept. 30 in Warrensburg, Missouri.

“It’s a one-game approach,” Wright said about the mentality of preparing for a tough opponent. “You treat every game as if it’s a playoff game. You don’t get to the next playoff game until you win the first playoff game, and that’s kind of the way we’re treating it is, just, we have to have all hands on deck. We have to be ready to play.”

After the Mules started the season 2-1 — the lone blemish being a 1-point loss to reigning MIAA champions No. 3 Pittsburg State (4-0) Sept. 16 — they became nationally ranked for the first time since the 2021 preseason. Central followed that up with a 58-28 win over

Central Missouri averages

547.5 yards per game.

No. 1 in the MIAA

VS.

Northwest allows

286.8 yards per game.

No. 1 in the MIAA

INFOGRAPHIC BY SAVANNAH ATHY-SEDBROOK DESIGN EDITOR

Washburn Sept. 23.

Like the Mules, Northwest is also coming off a big weekend. The Bearcats found exactly what they were looking for in their 59-0 win over Lincoln Sept. 23 — momentum. After losing two straight for the first time since 2018, the Northwest blowout is its largest triumph since 2017.

They found momentum in a variety of ways against the Blue Tigers, with five touchdowns on the ground and three more through the air. Defensively, the Bearcats held Lincoln to a meager 50 yards on 51 plays. Junior defensive end Jake Fisher said the performance should give the team a lot of confidence heading into Warrensburg.

“I think it was a huge confidence gain for us,” Fisher said. “Came together as a

UP NEXT

NW vs. Central Missouri
1 p.m. Sept. 30
Warrensburg, Missouri

team and all three phases did really well. I think our confidence just goes up to go out there and play a complete game, and, going into a bigger game like this, it’s all you need is just more confidence.”

The Week 5 showdown will feature a battle of strengths, as Northwest is No. 1 in the MIAA in yards allowed per game (286.8) while Central is top in the conference in offensive yards per contest (547.5).

SEE BATTLE | A6

SEE SOFTBALL | A6

UP NEXT

MHS vs. North Platte
5 p.m. Oct. 2
Maryville High School

MHS vs. Savannah
5 p.m. Oct. 3
Maryville High School

MHS vs. Mid-Buchanan
4:30 p.m. Oct. 4
Faucett, Missouri

MHS vs. South Harrison
5:30 p.m. Oct. 5
Maryville High School

First away game in nearly two weeks next ahead in St. Joseph for Maryville

DESTINY TAYLOR

Sports Reporter | @destinytay04

Maryville football will travel Sept. 29 to St. Joseph to play St. Joseph-Benton. It will be the Spoofhounds’ first time back on the road after hosting two games against Midland Empire Conference foes St. Pius X and Cameron.

It is Benton coach Corey Bertini’s first year as a program leader. The Class 3 District 8 Cardinals have lost four of their five games, while the Class 4 District 8 Spoofhounds have won four out of five games. The ‘Hounds have defeated the Cardinals in 12 consecutive matchups. Maryville coach Matt Webb said Benton is still adjusting to the new coach.

“Benton’s defense — they struggled last week against Savannah — but they’re certainly getting better each

week, and I see them making a lot of progress,” Webb said.

After halftime at Maryville’s (4-1) homecoming win Sept. 22 against Cameron, senior quarterback and conference leader for passing yards with 1,312, Derek Quinlin was pulled from the game with an unspecified injury. Webb said he does not give updates on injuries, and Quinlin will be back in the game whenever he is ready.

Junior quarterback and defensive back Matthew Walter took over for Quinlin in the game, totaling 69 passing yards and one touchdown pass. As the team prepares to travel again, Walter said the mentality of the Spoofhounds is the same as it would be for a home matchup.

“(The Cardinals) have some very good athletes on both offense and de-

fense, so we are going to need to come out ready to play on Friday night,” Walter said. “As a team, our goal each week is to focus on the game plan and to go 1-0. We need to beat the trip, stay focused and when it comes time to play, win the game.”

Despite the team’s success on its home field with its complete defensive shutout over Cameron that ended 21-0, junior defensive back Kole Zarbano said the games on the road usually result in a better mindset for the team. Fewer distractions from the pressure of playing in the ‘Hound Pound helps build the mentality. Benton (1-4) has hosted three games, winning one against Northeast (Kansas City) in the season opener Aug. 25.

Benton is sixth in the MEC with a winning percentage of .200 compared to Maryville’s percentage of .800 — No. 1 in the conference.

SEE AWAY | A6

UP NEXT

MHS vs. St. Joseph-Benton
7 p.m. Sept. 29
St. Joseph, Missouri



ALLISON DUARTE PHOTOGRAPHER

Maryville football sophomore running back/linebacker Sadler Viau kicks off in the second quarter with a place kick during the Sept. 22 homecoming game against Cameron.

Spoofhound softball set for three games in three days

TANNER HUDNALL

Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

Maryville softball defeated East Buchanan Sept. 20 and St. Pius X Sept. 21, but fell to Worth County Sept. 25 on the road. The Spoofhounds have outscored their opponents 60-34 over the last six games.

Maryville’s bats erupted in its wins against the Bulldogs and Warriors, totaling 38 runs in the two games. The Spoofhounds beat East Buchanan by 16 runs. The bats were strong, especially senior shortstop Ella Schulte and junior pitcher Emma Sprague, who combined for eight hits. During the game, Sprague also threw five innings and struck out eight Bulldog batters.

Schulte’s offensive performance this season is leading the team. She currently has a .492 batting average and an OPS of 1.384.

“I think we had great starts in our last three games,” Schulte said. “We came out and got straight down to business.”

Maryville followed the East Buchanan triumph with another dominant performance on both sides of the ball against Pius. Junior pitcher Phoebe Hornickel had her best performance of the season. She only allowed one earned run through five innings. Hornickel also had three strikeouts.

Even though Hornickel had her best performance of the season, she was not alone as the offense scored nine runs in the first inning and 17 total for the game. Junior designated hitter Emma Alely drove in six runs and had two hits in the contest.